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INTRODUCTION TO A PAMPHLET

ENTITLED

“American Farming Financially and
Morally Considered.”

BEARING ON THE

PRESENT POLITICAL CRISIS.

BY ALFRED THOMAS, C. E.,

Author of “Comparisons of English and American Farming.”

BIBLIOTHÈQUE
SAINT-CULPICE

HALIFAX, N. S.
1890.

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EXDPTCLBS
ZORLIS-THAS

"Impracticable theories grow out of thought without labor. The man who wishes to reform the world must bear a part in the world's interests and occupations, he must do his share in the labor of the world as it is, or he cannot hope in any degree to make the world as it should be."—*Family Herald*, May 15th, 1886.

In bringing this pamphlet before the public, the writer would beg to make a few explanations and remarks as, it is now being used for a purpose for which it was not originally intended; the writer was much impressed last winter by the high tone taken by many of the magazines, English and American, in their various and generally amusing and instructive articles; it then occurred to him that he might bring his great practical experience of over a quarter of a century to bear in helping to forward a noble cause, besides earning some fair remuneration during the long winter months; the article grew under his pen into a space not originally anticipated; which, considering the subject, could not be well helped, and this combined with other reasons may have caused its rejection by the magazine to which it was sent. The manuscript was then sent to Ottawa, and submitted to the Imperial Federation League, and again rejected, I think, without having a perusal, on account of the title; the writer's object in taking this action will be apparent to the ordinarily intelligent reader upon reading the pamphlet, and the rejection has fully confirmed him in his previous opinion of the great wisdom of the late Mr. John Bright and other eminent men, the Premier himself being among the number, unless he is mistaken, in attaching very little importance to the influence of the League in accomplishing its avowed object.

[An energetic friend at Ottawa who had himself been an unsuccessful farmer owing, no doubt, in part, at all events, to the want of the legitimate support that had so embarrassed the present writer, then, on his own responsibility, presented the manuscript to the Minister of Agriculture; who acted in a most judicious manner, doing all that could be expected or possible, by requesting Dr. Saunders, the head of the Experimental Farm, who pronounced most favorably, to review it. So I am advised, officially. Under these circumstances the writer will feel himself justified in asking for a small grant at the next meeting of the Legislature, as it is a fact well known, that of all literary productions, pamphlets of the slightest philosophical tendency, no matter how well written, or by whom, are the most difficult of works to get any fair remuneration for, and a rising country like the Dominion would scarcely demand so great a self-sacrifice of time, labor and ability as such a pamphlet, even if badly written, must require; neither does the writer anticipate any trouble, in this way, particularly after the exceedingly liberal way in which he was treated by the Local Legislature of Nova Scotia, on a similar occasion, when the subject, altho' the same, was necessarily more

localised, and the writer had not that experience which nothing but the constant use of the pen can give; although the productions, according to the advice given by Lockart to young writers, may be sacrificed to that great receptacle of disappointed ambition—the waste basket.

The foregoing remarks are made mainly for this purpose: that the public are so accustomed to look for a strong partizanship in any literary production, that but few can conceive how politics can possibly be even touched on without it; that this has fairly been carried, I leave the reader to judge, but it must be apparent that under the circumstances it was impossible to localize them for party purposes.

The subject is so important, and already pamphlets are being spread abroad, facts figures and ideas so distorted, and misrepresented to influence the public, that the writer will if possible endeavor to have a few thousand copies struck off so that at least he may start fair in the line of reasoning, and before the public mind becomes too much biased and prejudiced.

The writer has presented his views regarding the great question that should be uppermost in the public mind pending the next election; but as the letters cannot well be printed in this production, he merely reiterates what he has before stated, and which he thinks he can now prove, that the financial state of the country, and the bearing of its institutions on our different industries must be the great questions of the day, and take precedence of all others; that this subject is not at all understood can be proved by a fair criticism of the productions before referred to; also, that from a want of the application of the principles herein enunciated, all the troubles of the Maritime Provinces spring, and that until the matter is thoroughly understood the evil cannot in any way be rectified. It is no slur on the ability and characters of our legislators and representatives to state that even if omnipotent they are not omniscient, neither do they pretend to be so, at all events those that I have come across. They are always open to conviction, and I believe at heart have more sincere patriotism than they get credit for; but what can they do, they can only give effect by legislation to measures that we farmers show to be necessary and advisable; the initiative must proceed from us, and what do we ever do to give either them or the capitalists the least confidence in us? Nothing! we are as full of impractical fads as an egg is of meat, as the saying is; but I must not anticipate the pamphlet itself, but I will remark only that of all the old, rotten, leaky boats, that you farmers expect to land you on the shores of prosperity, low taxation, low rates of interest, and forced markets, are the worst. You lose more in one year by the misapplication of your little capital, than a revision of the three former to the lowest extremity would ever make up for, besides which, you have no direct control over the matter at all and never will have; get money as cheap as you can by all means, but don't discuss impossibilities; believe me, as an experienced farmer, the only remedy for your position is first to thoroughly realize it; be candid to yourself; there is no occa-

sion to expose your private affairs at all ; it does not take a great deal of deep thinking to shows that it is bad enough ; as General Butler says, you are poor financiers ; this is true, but it is unjust to lay the blame entirely on you, and I don't think that my pamphlet would be out of place even in the legislative halls.

Referring to the productions that have come before the public to influence them I shall only refer to two, as I wish to be as concise as possible. One pamphlet is issued on behalf of the reciprocity party and founded on the speeches of Hon. Erasmus Wiman. Now mind, reader, I don't pretend to judge on the merits of the question itself at all, and had the writer confined himself to that question he would have done better, but the pamphlet itself is such a mass of mistatements, special pleading, inconsistencies, and shows such an entire ignorance of the whole subject on which it pretends to advise, that were it not for the capital opportunity it gives me of strengthening my own case—in the way that a learned judge once decided a case very rapidly : “ I decide it in favor of brother A, on the strength of brother B's argument ”—I should pass it over in silence. It merely offers the United States as a market in exchange for certain privileges. Now the great trouble with us farmers is that we have literally nothing to sell, at all events that anyone wants. What we want is capital to develop our agricultural resources, and that the Americans cannot supply us with. Nova Scotia is a great grass and apple country, and her proximity to England gives great opportunities for supplying that country with beef, but owing to our absurd financial system we cannot even supply our own market ; for the same reason the fruit trade is not half developed. The pamphlet also confirms my opinion that the American financial system has been as erratic as our own, altho' a great deal more liberal, and different from that of Ontario, which is really founded on the basis of the tenant and landlord management. This is a very important fact to know, as it meets another misrepresentation, that is of our loyalty being nothing but a blind attachment to old, played-out, antiquated association, and if I am really correct in my surmises, which I think the pamphlet proves, it then turns the tables on the enemy with a vengeance, showing that they are the parties prejudiced, not us, and when we read of the deplorable state that these institutions have left the United States in, by their own admission, we wonder at men like Prof. Goldwin Smith, and others, and feel very much inclined to tell them to stay in the land of their adoption, and mind their own business.

There is another feature of this wonderful production that is worthy of notice. After calling attention to the extreme poverty of the farmers of the United States, the writer pleads with us to deal with them, on the ground that Great Britain deals with poor countries. Now what nonsense all this is, as if anyone cares whether they are rich or poor, as long as they pay for what they get ; but as to whether it is worth while to have very intimate commercial transactions with a country

that has completely paralysed its greatest industry by institutions that we utterly condemn, and that to the detriment of a country that has enriched and enobled herself, and can do the same; to us through those very institutions. That is another story altogether; the remedy and cause of this state of affairs are equally absurd and illogical. As to the former, it is about on a parallel with that given to little Bo Peep on that celebrated occasion well known to children, and as to the latter, the writer altogether mistakes cause for effect; the young men leaving their farms was not the cause of the depression in agriculture but the effect. In plain terms, they saw no chance ahead; and so it would be with us, if there was any place to go to. Don't let the reader imagine for one moment that I am attempting to cast reflection or ridicule on the great American nation, that I have so great a respect for. The matter is altogether too serious, and for my part I never can forget the kindness and delicately concealed attention shown me as a small boy when first crossing the Atlantic—things done for me without even my knowledge which I doubt very much whether many of my own countrymen would have thought of unless the case was prominently brought before them. Again quite lately I have heard Americans defending Englishmen and English institutions when unjustly attacked in a way that the writer would hardly dare to. The self-reliance and independence of Englishmen, and which our present system would deprive us of, appear particularly to have impressed these gentlemen present. Still you are not realizing Charles Dickens' expectations as expressed in the finale of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and there is no getting over the fact that you are too prejudiced and insular; yes, I use the term although it is a pretty big island; your prejudice against the landed aristocracy of England may only amuse them, but it certainly hurts you. I am not defending them by any means; they are perfectly able to take care of themselves, always clever, experienced in land management, and now adversity has sharpened their wits we had better take care that they are not too much for us. So much for the pamphlet; may it be well read.

I now come to the other production referred to—the statement of the number of mortgages, bills of sale and judgments on record. Several gentlemen, knowing that I study this subject, have asked me what I think of the matter, and the answer is, I really don't know. I have not investigated it or looked at it from the point of view that you do at all; but it certainly has explained to me many things that have hitherto been a mystery, and almost incomprehensible. I can now begin to understand how it is that my own life has hitherto been an almost uninterrupted struggle for existence, why those who were bound by all honor and principle to assist me and my family, have been my most determined opponents! destroying the whole happiness of a large portion of our lives. I can understand now why the highest court in the land, although ultimately acceding to my request, made propositions to me so unjust, so insulting that my lawyers rejected them at once: in

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fact, I have settled in a foreign land. 'Tis true the people speak the same language, and some of the laws are pretty much the same that one has been used to, but as for the institutions, ideas of right and wrong, and general principles of life that ought to govern us in our conduct through life—where they originated heaven only knows, and how they ever maintained themselves under the British Flag is to me a mystery. I well recollect the last words of an old uncle and guardian, one of the old type of English clergymen, as intimate with the worldly affairs of his parishioners as their spiritual, and as capable of guiding them, in presenting his last gift, a bible, he remarked: "Now there is not the slightest occasion for your leaving your native land, but if you must go, be a man, be a credit to your country." So I have tried to be, according to my lights anyway, but it appears that I have been mistaken. Instead of using my capital, brains, and energy to develop my adopted country, the former should have been invested at a high rate of interest, and I myself should have become one of those excrescences that spring out of our present system, and eat at the foundation of all morality, a fat officeholder. I presume that the publication above referred to is intending to show how unprosperous the country is under confederation; it has appeared in papers representing both sides of politics, and I have looked in vain for an answer. Were the matter not so serious, involving men homes, happiness, and the whole fate of the rising generation, it would be amusing to watch the paper warfare that will issue. As it is, I must anticipate; the answer per contra will be in all probability: How much better would Nova Scotia have been off under the old state of affairs? Look at the general progress of the Dominion, etc., and, as far as Nova Scotia is concerned, the old Bo Peep advice will be reiterated. Now, let us look into the matter fairly and see what an amount of fallacy there is all round. I admit that the judgments in connection with the bills of sale look, to say the least, fishy; and knowing the way business is done in Nova Scotia, the record is by no means satisfactory; but by far the worst feature in the whole matter is the fact that statistics that might and would in another country and under a different state of affairs, indicate the greatest commercial and agricultural activity and prosperity, should be looked upon in such a light. To illustrate the matter fairly; a man may own a manganese mine, gold mine, or plaster rock or even a farm without a mortgage on it. The reader will hardly believe me when I say that I actually know cases where these are encumbrances, although not legally classed as such, as they cost more to keep up than the revenue obtained, now, my mine proprietor wishes to convert his encumbrance into a profit; he dances attendance at Wall Street, swilling gin cocktails between interviews to sustain his courage till he feels utterly demoralized, and gets things so mixed up that he hardly knows right from wrong; he started from home feeling an independent man; was he not going to bring capital and intelligence to bear to develop raw material? In one week's time he wishes his quarries at the bottom of

the sea ; he feels like a man trying to pass a fraudulent note, doubts whether he has a quarry at all, and if he does not succeed he bores all his friends for the next twelvemonth with complaints of the want of enterprise in the world. If he is lucky and sells out, well and good, he comes home and plays big Indian and hunts for another quarry. But suppose our mining friend is a bit of an expert, recognizes fully the value of his property and feels inclined to work it himself ; if he is judicious he will get a thorough set of plans and sections and estimates made by a competent engineer. Armed with these he approaches the capitalist, and if the article is really good and in demand the chances are that he gets his money. A mortgage is filed and he adds an encumbrance to his encumbrance ; the work then commences, wharves are built, shafts sunk, rails laid, pumping apparatus purchased, earth removed, and each Saturday night the men are paid with the promises to pay of institutions that have not advanced a single cent towards the success of the work ; however it proceeds, and the capital is exhausted without producing anything that can be immediately turned into cash. Our friend then, again, appeals to his engineer who marks the exact progress made on the original plan, he then again approaches the capitalist who, on deliberation, declines to advance any more on the fee simple of the property, but agrees to advance on a bill of sale of the stock, &c. This is done, and another incumbrance filed ; so the work proceeds, the capital is again exhausted, and still they don't "strike ile ;" the capitalist then requires his interest, and not to embarrass his mortgagor, and to save himself a judgment is entered by mutual consent, and this may be the whole solution of this great Tempest in a Teapot. But on the other hand, suppose the desired consummation is not arrived at, and the work is closed, perhaps by a sheriff's sale, the capitalist is re-imbursed, and the mine owner loses his property, and has wasted a good part of his lifetime, his credit is more or less shaken, and things look black indeed ; the chances are, having neglected all other business for this, he may want a little temporary accommodation to almost keep his family from starving ; he gets an endorsement from some brother in adversity for a few paltry dollars, for the poor only help the poor, and it is refused by these very institutions that his own pluck and energy has made their "promises to pay" anything but waste paper, and at the same time young Scrooge, who has started a liquor and grocery store round the corner, exchanging endorsements with young Marley, doing a similar business, is gladly passed, and respectable shareholders draw a dividend therefrom, and then go away and preach prohibition. The mine itself may then pass into other hands, becoming equal to a preferential security, if even left untouched. So much has been done for the prosperity of the country of which no account whatever is taken in the official returns, no valuation is made of the property before and after, it is simply classed as encumbered. As for our friend, the miner, his future is not worth looking into : "Let him go, he is a failure, not the

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right kind of man," that's the term; he has only exhibited those qualities that won Albuera and Waterloo, and made and will sustain the British Empire to the last, and how many men in Hants County alone have we who have gone through this experience? I now will endeavor to illustrate my point from farming experience, and, fortunately or the reverse, I hardly know which, I need not go beyond the boundaries of my own property for our illustration.

It is not pleasant for anyone not endowed with a superfluous amount of egotism to bring their private affairs before the public, but in the present instance the writer feels justified. Taking this view of the case, the remarks made will bear only on the point at issue, as much as possible.

Undertaking farming in Nova Scotia, as the writer did some twenty-five years ago, and with considerable capital, and commencing as a practical engineer, it did not take him very long to see plainly that agriculture, as a profession, was utterly unrecognized; his profession told him that no farmer, no matter what his education and practical knowledge could ever achieve success. "Chance," or what we deliberately call chance, then drew the writer's attention to the value of underdrainage. Acting himself on his own preconceived ideas, he then undertook to drain his farm; this he accomplished. Of course, inaugurating new work meant encountering great difficulties. These were overcome! How? By sacrificing his own life, capital, family and worldly happiness.

At the time that the present writer was undertaking this great work, on which the whole agricultural success of the country depends, the Legislature was deliberately embarrassing him, by making him pay a duty on tiles. What was Ontario doing? Loaning money for the same purpose, to be paid by instalments, covering twenty years. But why go into details at all? Ontario has been encouraging agriculture for a century or more. Nova Scotia doing nothing. Ontario is now solving the greatest problem of pure independence in connection with land tenure.

Let our politicians solve the great incongruity of Ontario, with a population of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions, 20 millions of bank stock, 90 millions loan society money, mostly creative *capital*. Nova Scotia not one cent of the latter.

After twenty-five years of labor the writer sees others enjoying the fruits of his labor and industry, still for all that he considers that he can class himself as at least one of the independent and really successful farmers in the country; he has been forced into the position of a landlord, having been compelled to lock up his capital, thereby losing two-thirds of his legitimate income. It has been hinted to the writer that it would be good taste to alter the title of his pamphlet, but he writes only as a practical man, who has dealt with nature all his lifetime, and recognizes fully the beneficence of a higher power in laying out our work for us, which we ourselves in our own narrow-minded obstinacy

are making obnoxious, distasteful and burdensome in a way never intended, diverting healthy, purifying pursuits into channels just the reverse. When the only financial institutions of the country will support men supplying articles, the sale of which are actually legislated against, and frowned down by the whole of the professing religious men of the country; while we, under any circumstances, are denied the legitimate fruits of our industry and any fair return for our invested capital, as any intelligent reader must see is the case on perusing the pamphlet, then I say he is justified in appealing to the sound, moral sentiment of the country. However, the writer anticipates no trouble whatever in having the matter rectified, provided it is gone about in a proper way. We are all interested in making our country a success, but it must be done in the proper way, and not by wringing the very life-blood out of our best men, the producers. I have illustrated the position of the unsuccessful miner, and the same may be said of the farmer. If a thousand enterprising young men, Nova Scotians or strangers, settled in Hants County to-morrow, commencing as the present writer did, an enormous impetus would be given to trade, large dividends declared by the banks, and the country declared to be progressing, and yet, it is as certain as I am writing this, that not one of them could ever realize the fruits of their labor, and if this is the principle on which our country is to be made, I say let it fall. The fact is, we all mean well but are working at sixes and sevens. The motto at the head of this article is too much ignored.

I have referred to the industries started in Hants County; let me repeat conversations that actually have taken place with some of the originators. "Don't you think, Mr. Mounce, that good superphosphate will pay a hundred per cent. to the farmer? It would pay a large percentage to you on your land. Why? Because of the thorough drainage and pulverization it would be all assimilated. But what advantage does a farmer get by using your phosphate and selling the hay produced at present prices? Nothing, except the stimulus given in sowing down." Again to Mr. Pidgeon: "I suppose you think you are conferring a great benefit on the country in circulating a first-class article of food plant? Well, I certainly do, why not? and the banks are helping in this noble work. Well, I will just tell you the effect; the banks and you are benefitted temporarily, and the farmer is giving his time, land, labor, for literally nothing; he sells hay to meet a note, at about the value of the original elements that you supply him with, no more. Then you would argue that artificial manures are no good. Certainly not, they are one of the greatest blessing of modern science, but like anything else, borrowed money or anything, can be turned into curses by misapplication. A ton of first-class malting barley utilizes no more phosphate potash, ammonia, than a ton of hay, yet one is worth as many pounds as the other is dollars. Then why not all grow barley, and accept the proffered assistance of the minister of agriculture? Here we are again all working in

harmoniously. If, as a leading Halifax paper states, we could throw all rotation over, then it might work, but unfortunately, that would entail the feeding of weeds of which you would grow any amount, and rotations require through drainage, and it is perhaps necessary more in Nova Scotia than anywhere, and even where rotations are fully established as they must be in some parts of Ontario, I would say to be cautious, and do not ignore the sound rule of agricultural financial economy, but substitute stuffs inferior as food for man, but rich in manurial ingredients; you will make slightly inferior meat in quality but you will not be exhausting your capital. With Ontario selling her apatite and coprolites to enrich English estates, lean cattle to be finished off on the same properties, malting barleys exported without an equivalent return; the great north-west exporting wheat at a cost of thirty cents per bushel deterioration, Nova Scotia literally sacrificing her grass crop for want of capital to manufacture it, nothing but the most judicious and enlightened legislation can save us from the sad fate of our neighbors, and yet in the face of these facts we have ignorant and self conceited men constantly interfering in our business, attempting, as they call it to check the borrowing propensity of the farmers which means, in diverting English capital into other countries; even Ontario has a tremendous competitor in the English farmer who can use all his resources as working capital. I refer again to the story of incumbrances as indicating the state of the country; could the present writer have borrowed money for the purchase of lean cattle to fatten on his grass, a bill of sale would have been filed for the amount, and old mother Grundy, sitting in her bank parlor, would have refused him any temporary accommodation on these grounds, and yet the writer declares, that it would have at least trebled his income. If Ontario is borrowing money for the purpose of tile draining properly, that is so as not to embarrass the farmer, you can safely add in valuation one hundred per cent. to the value of the commonwealth for every dollar borrowed and this will not anything like meet the case; the subsoil plough follows the drainage, phosphates and feeding stuffs are liberally used, and your farmer becomes a manufacturer. A great deal is talked about loyalty and patriotism, and the English flag is pretty well biandied about, and is supposed to cover everything for good or for evil, you forgetting that it is merely an inanimate piece of bunting symbolical of a power to enforce good and retard evil, but, that good and evil must be represented to the power it represents in a proper way. To state that Nova Scotia is perfectly loyal, and to quote the past, as was lately done in London, is merely talk. Is she satisfied with the present condition of things? that is the point, and to this I say no, and I should be very sorry that she should be, as it would be one of the saddest sights that one could possibly imagine, and show that the country was morally and socially degraded beyond all redemption.

If the English flag does not cover principles and ideas that make it superior to those of other nationalities, it is not worth bowing obedience

to at all, and no one recognises this more than Her Majesty, she fully recognising her power and where it emanates from.

THE PREMIER AND THE GOVERNMENT POLICY REVIEWED.

Since writing the preceeding pages, we have received a visit from the Premier, who has generally declared the government policy for the future, also justifying the past action. Whether it will be satisfactory to the county at large or not, I am unprepared to say, and as far as the writer is concerned he would merely remark, that generally it is entirely in accordance with his ideas; the only trouble being that no system of legislation for the future to meet the present emergency, caused, not only by the action of the United States, but by past neglect, is even as much as hinted at. This as the whole tenor of this brochure will show is perhaps quite excusable, and might be anticipated. The remarks made regarding the system of borrowing money, both by governments, and private individuals, have been so ventilated by the writer for the last quarter of a century, from his first public article, published by the *Journal of Agriculture*, and entitled: "On the application of farm capital," and some years after comparisons of English and American farming, up to date, that the public can have no doubt about his thorough coincidence in opinion with Sir John on this great point, but at the same time it should be borne in mind that capital can be abused, and that without being put to any really bad uses, and this system of imputing the worst motives to what may only be an error of judgment is one of the unfortunate outcrops of our political system, and belongs equally to both parties, but the world discriminates but little between an error of judgment, caused often by enthusiasm, and a positive sin, as the writer but too well knows; it looks only to the final result. And this applies equally to countries and private individuals; consequently in all legislation we should be guided as much as possible by the motto at the head of this article, while taking care at the same time that all the strict principles of fair play, justice and morality are carried out. The local government, in borrowing a large sum of money for the public roads were severely censured, and whether justly or not I am unprepared to say, as so much depends on a definite answer to the question I am now propounding, and the same rule may apply to the general action of the government at Ottawa. Sir John makes a very natural and common mistake in supposing that the whole confederation is run under the same general laws and institutions, while in reality the financial institutions of the Province of Ontario are so different and so superior to those of the Maritime Provinces, that what might be quite right and justifiable in one case would not be in the other; a whole network of railways and macadamized roads all over the Province does not meet the emergency of our necessities in the slightest degree, it merely facilitates the transportation to market of what we have to produce

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by the absorption of our working capital and the unrequited labor of our sons and daughters, the whole system being entirely antagonistic to all British ideas of fair play and sound political economy, as we are legislating for the country, and indirectly for party, instead of for the people, literally opening up the country, for you cannot call it developing, at the cost of happy homes and lives of the people. The result may be seen in the almost innumerable homesteads occupied by strangers, and each of which can tell its own story of a household's wreck, and still this work goes on. As a neighboring farmer remarked to the present writer only the other day, "What in the name of common sense is the use of the showing the effect of their tile draining at Nappan?" Have we not seen the same work skillfully carried on for ten years consecutively under our own eyes? and the result better to the land than ever we anticipated, but disastrous to you in the extreme; consequently, in carrying this opening up system, under present circumstances, we are legislating for a future generation, as far as the real producers of the country are concerned, and the worst of the matter is that the non-producers, the mere hangers-on, are benefitted immediately, the same as they are by the banking system, which does not produce a blade of grass, a barrel of apples or a pound of beef. It must be plain to the reader from the foregoing remarks, that the general government are far more justified in borrowing money for expenditure on public works that are non-productive than the local are simply for the reason that they may not be altogether unproductive; they also come out of the general expenditure. It must also be patent that to justify the expenditure of both the local and the general government, the producing capacity of the country must be looked to and not thrown on those utterly unable to sustain the burden. This has not been done except in Ontario, and our local government declares that it has neither the means or the power to accomplish anything in this way: if this is really the case, then any system that reduces the duties and responsibilities to so limited a sphere is altogether too expensive as at present for the country; if on the other hand, it is within their power and means to place this province on the same footing as Ontario, they have been guilty of negligence and extravagance.

If there is anything at all that will have a tendency to break down the confederation and prevent it being a success, it will be entirely our own incapacity and bad legislation; if we choose to ignore all good sound moral teaching and then fail, we at least have no right to drag the British Empire into the mess. Sir John admires British institutions, and in practice utterly ignores them, or at least the most valuable of them, those that give the farmer the control of his capital. We have now had a visit from the leader of one party, and will soon in all probability have another visit from the opposition leader, and we will see what he has to say about the matter. In the mean time, that is before a general election, we owe our duties to ourselves and families

to post ourselves thoroughly. Patriotism and loyalty are terms altogether too thoughtlessly used and abused. No man can give a greater or more acceptable offering, at least I take it to be so, to the giver of all than the results of a successful life. A life based on pure moral work ; work that elevates the whole country, and that all can participate in. A great writer calls success a sacrament ; is it so ? I don't like to tread on dangerous grounds, but I should like to call the attention of my readers to the wonderful allegorical story of Cain and Abel ; how often has it been misinterpreted. The Almighty plainly blames Cain for his want of success, not refusing his best, as is generally thought for his best was bad, and if we cannot take these teachings to heart, and act on them in the practical every day affairs of life what a farce religion becomes. We are legislating now not for Canada, but for the future of the whole North American Continent, to go no further, and the wretched, miserable way in which the whole matter is being undertaken is enough to make anyone who really believes in anything at all fairly heart sick. However, I trust a great deal to the sound moral feeling of the people, that only wants awakening.

ALFRED C. THOMAS, C.E.

A great many suggestions are being given as the best means of averting the evils caused by the passage of the McKinley Bill, and emanating as they mostly do, from inexperienced men, they are visionary and impractical. One man has made the wonderful discovery that too much hay is sold off the farm, another that too many hens are kept, and so on, and the remedies proposed are easier talked of than carried out. Without a thorough knowledge of our subject, both practically and theoretically we can do nothing of any value and this remark applies particularly to our legislature, at the present time. To commence at the theoretical part. What is the reason, that from almost time immemorial, our farmers have continued so manifestly unprofitable a business in every way as hay selling must be under any ordinary circumstances ? Simply for the reason that under our present financial system they could not, and even now cannot help themselves. Were they to attempt feeding on any scale as things now stand, in one year they would be insolvent. Why ? Because, selling even as they do now, at the price of the original elements, only plus the unpaid labor of their families, and exhausting their land, it is infinitely more profitable than feeding. 'Tis true the evil day is only put off until the property has to be settled up by death or foreclosure. Then the old, old, story is told again, sons are turned adrift in a poorer condition than any working man, with a life's labor lost, and a repetition of the same iniquitous business commences, to end in the same way, and yet the writer of this has been accused of want of patriotism because, in answer to an English magazine, in which emigrants with means are advised to pass through Nova Scotia, he fully justifies the remarks of the editor, praising the country, but condemning the financial institutions. The fact is that the

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idea so prevalent in this Province that everything must be done for us by others while we look on and enjoy the benefit, must be thoroughly eradicated by sound reason and common sense before we can enjoy any amount of prosperity. Were it possible for emigrants or even natives with skill and capital to meet success as agriculturists, it might be a different matter, but it is simply an arithmetical impossibility, as the writer's pamphlet plainly show; so each must do their share—legislature, farmer, working man, and last and perhaps least of all the capitalist; as money with proper knowledge and measures for security is at a tremendous discount everywhere. Before continuing the practical discussion on hay selling, I will merely remark, that after years of confederation it is at least uncomfortably suggestive that it should be left to the Premier as the only one to endorse views that have been so faithfully and consistently advocated by the writer for a quarter of a century. That these thoroughly sound and constitutional measures have only been in practice in one section of the Dominion is a very grave reflection, to say the least, on some of our legislators. If the system of loans, as carried on in Ontario is right and proper and can be justified, then we in Nova Scotia have been treated most disgracefully. I merely establishing the principle of tenant and landlord, without its advantages and none of its objections, in fact approaching the great desideratum of all good thinking philanthropists, that every poor man who wishes can share the benefits of the land equally with the rich, and to do that he must have the means to make that land valuable or anything but a burden, and these means can only be furnished by institutions constitutionally established for that purpose. At present, we in the Maritime Province are pretty much in the same state as our neighbors in the neighboring Republic, whether in attempting to avoid an aristocratic scylla, they are in danger of stranding on a plutocratic Charybdis, as a sound oligarchy is our only salvation, and this can be established by a sound system of finance. To exemplify the hay story by illustration: an ox weighing seven hundred weight of beef and put up in say November, would consume the twenty pounds of hay per diem for 200 days, and would come out in the spring exactly as he went in, if not poorer, the food merely supplying the heat of the body and ordinary waste of the tissues. Could he be made to consume double the quantity, which on account of its bulk would be impossible, then a fair profit would be made or at all events, the farmer would be paid a fair market value for his hay plus the manure. That he can condense that surplus hay is almost an impossibility, consequently he is compelled to go into supplementary feeding, giving more concentrated food, and this food has to be purchased, and a cash price paid, which is an investment that our farmer does not feel inclined to go into. Now what is the result of all this? that the hay or grass crops is completely sacrificed as raw material, and this in a country that prides itself on its capacity for protecting manufacturing interests.

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V.S.—